

HEADQUARTERS

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTY NINTH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION

Office of the Surgeon

REFERENCE

APO ** 403, US ARMY
26 June 1945

DO NOT CIRCULATE

SUBJECT: Period Reports, Medical Department Activities.

TO : The Surgeon General, Washington, D.C.

The 179th F.A. Bn. was the first Battalion of the 179th F.A. Regt. which was activated into Federal service in February 1941 when it was a Georgia National Guard unit. Upon activation the unit was trained at Camp Blanding, Florida, where it was located at the outbreak of the present war. Early in 1942 the unit moved to Camp Shelby, Mississippi and it was in March 1943 while it was one of the regiments in the 74th F.A. Brig. that it was dissolved and the first Battalion of the Regiment, now known as the 179th F.A. Bn. was moved by train to Fort Sill, Oklahoma and there became a unit of school troops. It was at Fort Sill, Oklahoma that the present Medical Detachment was trained under the outline of twenty six weeks training prescribed by the Field Artillery School for Field Artillery Battalion Medical Detachments. Early in 1944 the unit moved to Camp Gruber, Oklahoma and began processing for anticipated overseas assignment. The 179th F.A. Bn. with attached Medical Detachment was sent to the Tennessee maneuver area in February 1944 and returned to Camp Gruber to be put thru the tests required prior to over-seas shipment. In June of 1944 the alerted unit moved by train to Camp Myles Standish, Massachusetts. After processing for one week at Camp Myles Standish the unit shipped on the transport UAST Brazil for Gourock, Scotland where we landed on 12 July 1944 after a ten day voyage. By night the unit was moved overland to Nuneaton, England and there drew its T/E equipment and went thru the final stages of training.

The equipment of the eleven man and one officer Medical Detachment was obtained and the 1/4 ton 4 x 4 jeep was equipped with a standard double-decked litter rack to facilitate evacuation. Additional racks for gasoline and litters and a build-up for the 1/4 ton trailer were necessary in order to carry the Detachment's equipment. From the time that the unit drew all its T/E equipment and additional emergency supplies e.g., plasma, excess bandages and medications, there was not sufficient transportation facilities available to carry all the equipment and still be able to evacuate litter cases. For this reason the aid men took with them to their respective batteries all their personal and some additional medical supplies with which they could treat cases of mild nature in the batteries. This proved to be a very useful method of running sick call for routine colds, diarrheas, minor cuts and infections. In addition to this more racks were put on the fenders of the 3/4 ton W/C to carry camouflage nets and personal equipment. At all times it was deemed advisable to keep the litter rack area of the jeep free from equipment and consequently a rack was built on the back of the jeep for blankets and personal equipment of the men riding in the jeep. An emergency all purpose chest containing rations, additional bandages, tablets and plasma was carried on the hood of the jeep.

The unit crossed the English Channel via two LST's and one LCT, leaving from Weymouth and arriving on the beach at Utah on D plus 68. For the crossing the Medical Detachment was divided so that a Surgical Technician was on each ship with plasma and additional dressings. The crossing and landings were uneventful.

On the 21st of August 1944, six days after landing in France the unit was attached to the 4th Armored Division in the vicinity of Lorcy, France. From this date on the 179th F.A. Bn with its attached Medical Detachment was in constant support of units immediately contacting the enemy. On 8 May 1945, while with the 4th Armored Division in Zechowice, Czechoslovakia the nine months of actual combat without a rest period was ended.

As soon as the unit was advised that its role would be chiefly in support of Armor, the following plan for evacuation was put into effect. The 1/4 ton 4 x 4 with T/4 r reconnaissance non-com and one Surgical Technician was to travel with the forward battery of the Battalion. Their task was to stay near a radio car and notify the Battalion Surgeon and other aid station personnel who were to travel last among the tactical units of the Battalion of any anticipated bivouac or of the necessity of coming forward in case of serious injury to any members of the Battalion. The 3/4 ton W/C was to stay in immediate vicinity of a radio car. As soon as a position was picked the jeep crew were instructed to pick an area for the aid station, remaining within 75 yards of the C.P. The reason for this was communication and security and at night for electric lights necessary to adequately care for night casualties. Without exception this method worked well thru the entire French and Alsatian campaign. Whenever a casualty occurred, the nearest battery radio car sent word to the radio cars of the battery in code, asking for medical aid. The jeep took it only if it was near to them. In all other cases the W/C with the Medical Officer doubled the column and treated the wounded man by the roadside. The attached Med. Bn. which always had ambulances at the rear of the column picked the already wounded man as they passed the make-shift roadside aid station. The 3/4 ton W/C would then catch up to the rest of the column. Except for night marches this was the method used. At night the jeep returned and took the wounded to the end of the column and then doubled back to its position. This was done because of the ease with which the jeep could make the trip and also for security to the personnel from mines and so forth by the sides of the road.

There are a few outstanding engagements which members of this detachment participated in that will not be easily forgotten. They were the battle of Ferriers, France, the trap at Fresnes En Saulnois, the withdrawal from the Maginot Line at Rimling, Alsace to the battle of the Bulge, the march from Bitburg, Germany to the Rhine River and finally the Rhine crossing and the securing of the high ground east of Frankfurt. The remainder of combat thru Germany was correspondingly uneventful.

The battle of Ferriers was unexpected and bloody. On the evening of 21 August 1944, after meeting only scattered resistance, the Battalion went into position to support an Armored Infantry attack on Montargis. The Battalion was deployed in the vicinity of Ferriers. We were a bit crowded for space as defensive security required Headquarters Battery to be in the center of a long triangle formed by the three batteries. This was not an unusual armored defense as for the most part armor usually was operating behind main enemy defenses. We first became aware of the presence of a large enemy force on our right flank when one of our liaison planes flying low was fired on by machine guns. A jeep reconnaissance sent into the area was hit directly by a 105 mm German shell, killing two of the occupants and seriously wounding the remaining two. These two men crawled to within shouting distance of the battery on our right flank and we sent litters to carry them to the aid station. Plasma

was administered and the wounds dressed. Because of G-2 information brought back by the one wounded man that we were surrounded, the wounded men were not evacuated that night, but kept until daylight. At dawn it was discovered that a force about on Battalion in size was in position (they were artillery also) to shell us from our right flank at about 1500 yards. Quick thinking on the part of one Battery Commander confused the enemy when he fired Battery fifteen rounds into their position. Tanks were recalled from the armored column and went into the enemy position followed by our Medical Detachment which was called upon to treat wounded enemy prisoners which were becoming plentiful. Following one of the tanks down a road in the jeep three of the Detachment including the Medical Officer came upon a German aid station in full operation. Thirty two seriously wounded enemy soldiers were being cared for by eight enlisted men and one German officer with inadequate supplies, as they had been in the shelling. The jeep was dispatched to the rear and more plasma, dressings and medications plus more medical detachment personnel were brought to the enemy station. For four hours American and German Medical Department soldiers and Officer worked hand in hand and amputated, sutured, dressed and administered plasma. Two of the thirty two died of their wounds during that time. Finally five ambulances were brought up and the wounded evacuated. The German Medical Officer with his eight enlisted men were taken prisoner by our Medical Detachment and turned over to the PW enclosure in our rear area.

The battle and trap at Fresnes En Saulnois was also an unexpected affair. Armor drives fast and the going is rough but usually the impetus of an attack leaves the enemy and not us with casualties. However we holding the ground, have to evacuate enemy wounded. Ninety percent of our work in combat was of this nature. Fresnes was the exception. On September 19th after a shelling of our forward elements from our right flank, the battalion went into position on the east end of Fresnes to give counter battery fire. The day was hazy and visibility poor. Spot radic rounds had landed but early in the afternoon the haze lifted and an enemy barrage landed within two of our battery areas. Across fields, under enemy observation, our jeep went to the gun position and evacuated dead and wounded. In all that day one man was killed outright and six were wounded. On advice of the Battalion Commander unnecessary personnel of the battalion were withdrawn and the aid station was moved into a stone building to the rear of the C.P. The next four days were hazy and visibility poor. On Sunday 24 September the weather cleared and we found our battalion holding the area in the face of Artillery, tank and small arms fire. After the windows of our stone house were shattered by a near miss, we moved the aid station to the cellar. Two men were killed and fourteen wounded that day and all were evacuated from OP's and gun positions under constant shell fire. Five members of the Medical Detachment were awarded the Bronze Star for their activities in caring for the wounded that day. At dusk we evacuated the area and the Medical unit was among the last out. As Commanding Officer of my Detachment, I was more pleased and proud of the work of my enlisted men on that day than I had ever hoped to be.

The battle of the bulge began for the 179th F.A. Bn. Medical Detachment when our unit was alerted while holding the peak of the winter offensive at Rimling, Alsace. By night we withdrew from the much shelled town of Rimling and in zero weather travelled night and day for two days up to Arlon, Belgium. From there we went to Boulaide, Luxembourg and supported the 26th Div. attack on Wiltz and the preliminary crossing of the Sure River. Our evacuation of wounded was difficult because of the lack of an ambulance and because of frequent shiftings from group to

group we had no access to any without long waits until Div. Coll. Co's were contacted. Because of this we requested and secured an ambulance which was attached to the unit Medical Detachment. From then on all went well. Our unit supported the relief of Bastogne by keeping the corridor open by a almost constant shelling of enemy positions which flanked the highway into Bastogne. Breech block injuries of the nature of crushed fingers were common in this area due to the cold and long hours of firing. The element of fatigue caused many of them. Our Battalion did more firing in the two weeks of the Bulge than it did in any other period. The problem of keeping plasma water from freezing was a tough one. Chemical heating pads and placing a few units of water on the hot engine in moving from area to area to area helped. As soon as we occupied a station, hot water was secured by building fires and the plasma water kept continuously warm. At the end of the Bulge the unit moved out for the dash into Germany with the 4th Armored Division. This drive ended in the capture of Bitburg.

Our detachment recalls the mad dash from Bitburg to the Rhine at Coblenz as a 70 mile blitz thru the enemy's strongest defenses in 56 hours of night and day armored fighting. All the way the column was shelled while on the move. Time fore was put over the battalion and due to the excellent leadership of our acting Battalion Commander the entire unit reached the town of Ochtendung without a single casualty. One change was made in the order of march, the Battalion Surgeon riding his jeep followed the leading vehicle of the second battery. From this point he was centrally located and all units were aware of his position and called to the lead radio car of Baker battery for aid as needed. Again only German PW's and civilians were treated in this drive. The evacuation was smoothly carried out by radio contact with the 46th Medical Battalion, which directly followed our Battalion and carried into German civilian hospitals all wounded enemy civilians and soldiers. All of the Medical Department personnel in our unit felt that this march was the most remarkable feat of the war as the casualty rate was nil and the PW's and enemy group taken were tremendous in size and fortification. None of us ever spent so much time in trenches which the enemy conveniently provided for us along the march. At each stop of the column we drew fire and piled into the trenches. The big factors in not having high casualties were the keeping of stopped vehicles away from cross roads, the taking of cover at stops and the moving out quickly when the enemy Artillery found its range. In the frequent firing positions that we were in and out of during this march the Aid station did not completely set up. Plasma was kept ready and the aid station equipment was stacked so necessary items were handy. Due to the frequency of chest wounds in the Germans treated, pre-spread gauze with Boric Acid ointment was carried in the spare utility box on the jeep. This allowed the speedy sealing off of chest wounds on the field. The procedure was to clean off the area of the wound with ether, sprinkle with sulfanilamide powder and apply a dressing of Boric Acid ointment. Then with three inch tape the area was covered to seal off the sucking wound. This was used on three occasions with good results. All the supplies were in the jeep utility box and were applied by the roadside. In most cases plasma was withheld until the Collecting Company took over. This was necessary because of the speed of march thru enemy infested areas. The element of speed took the Germans by surprise and occasionally the supply trains were in more danger than the forward elements. Twice the rear was cut off and on these two occasions the wounded were evacuated by Collecting Company ambulances in the supply train with a few tanks along to open up the route of evacuation.

Without much rest either for us or the Germans we recrossed the Moselle to the south and in three days cleaned out the area to Mainz, Germany. After a one day rest the unit was placed in support of the 5th inf. Div. for the crossing of the Rhine in the vicinity of Oppenheim. After the bridge was put over the Rhine, we were returned to the 4th Armored Div. and the same method of march as employed from Bitburg to the Rhine was now adopted as SOP, and the reconnaissance was done by the assistant S-2 who was up forward. This was easy as we were in German territory and the aid station usually occupied the same building as the survey section which was headed by the assistant S-2. There were two reasons for this. One was that protection was deemed necessary for the Medical unit in enemy country and also because putting two units together there was only one dwelling to de-booby trap in an area. In order to secure aid for the advanced party an aid man was put with the survey section. This, it was felt, enabled immediate aid to be on hand for advanced details in case of injuries or wounds. This man also prepared the aid station location and it was easier to go into position at short notice. The first day across the Rhine the unit was strafed and shelled but only minor injuries occurred. One gasoline supply truck struck a mine and one of the men suffered ruptured ear drums. Two 50 caliber machine gun wounds were sustained but both were in the supply train and the following 46th Med. Bn. took care of them. No greater cooperation or team work between Medical units was ever displayed than that accorded us by the 46th Med. Bn. with our Detachment. With us they are tops. We are proud of the work done by the 4th Arm'd Div. while we supported them. We think they liked our support, because they continually requested us to be with them. Finally they recommended us for a Presidential Citation which we are now told will go through for us. All this leads up to the afternoon of 24 March 1945, when it was decided that there was no sense in sitting in low land and allowing the enemy on high ground ahead of us to shoot observed fire on our positions. Consequently, at dusk on the 24th, (the day of crossing the Rhine), we set out to take the high ground. All night we dashed the thirty miles necessary to carry us behind the enemy lines. Again the march took us thru the enemy lines and the cooperation of everybody made the defeat of the enemy around Frankfurt possible. Once 20 MM anti-aircraft shell were used on the column and a few casualties were encountered, but they were well cared for by the same system of evacuation previously described. This seemed to be the end of serious German resistance for our unit. No casualties were encountered among our Battalion units from here out. This phase seemed to end the excitement and work for our Medical Detachment.

For days we were switched from unit to unit acting as supporting Artillery. We left the 4th Arm'd. Div. at Odruf, Germany and doubled to Eisenach to support the 90th Inf. Div. Later on we rejoined the 4th Arm'd Div. to go to the Bavarian redoubt of Adolf Hitler only to have another American unit get there before we were ordered to proceed. We saw the war out in Czechoslovakia and the next day returned to the vicinity of Bogen, Germany to settle down to prepared I & E courses and organized athletics. Our unit cared for many civilians while in Kreis Bogen. We operated medicinally a 3000 person PW camp and deloused, treated and evacuated where necessary. Now that the Germans have their own Medical care set up for the community we are "sweating out" the point system for return home.

In conclusion of the report up to 25th of June 1945 there are a few comments that I think summarize the history of the 179th F.A. Bn. Medical Detachment in combat. One is that this unit has seven Bronze Star Medals for their service in the ETO. one man not included in the seven Bronze Stars, is recommended for the Legion of Merit award. With only

twelve of us in all, that is a very high percentage of awards. We awarded 57 Purple Hearts and none in the Detachment received any. We entered and ended the war with the same Medical personnel. We all agree that when travelling with Armor, evacuation works smoother than with Infantry Divisions, chiefly because of the proximity of all the units of an Armored Division. Our equipment was adequate except in inclement weather when an ambulance would have aided evacuation, especially while acting with the Infantry Divisions where Coll. Co. service was not as available as with the 46th Med. Bn. However the ambulance would increase the quality and efficiency of Medical care of the wounded at all times. Additional transportation, allowing the jeep to be for litter rack and driver and aid man only, would help. Suggested along this line would be another jeep or a 1 1/2 ton W/C and one ton trailer. The substitution of Coleman lanterns for kerosene lanterns would be advisable. Kerosene was unobtainable all thru combat and cleaning fluid makes a very poor light. It impresses me that a separate Field Artillery Battalion should have more complete self-sufficient equipment than a Divisional unit, in this regard even a small electric power plant would help. All in all we made out well with that we had.

We of the Medical Detachment of the 179th F.A. Bn., small in number though we be, feel that we were privileged to have had a part in this complete victory. All of us feel that our particular Battalion has distinguished itself and that being part of this Battalion is a reward of a self satisfying nature which we can carry individually with us wherever we go in a spirit of well done, we have no regrets.

PAUL J WEIGEL
Capt., MC, 179th FA Bn
Battalion Surgeon

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Copy

From: Lieut. Forrest E. Dukes, Jr.,
17th Bomg. Group, Headquarters,
APO 520 c/o Postmaster,
New York, New York.

Monday, April 12, 1943

To: Mr. and Mrs. Forrest E. Dukes,
5471 Julian Avenue,
Indianapolis, Indiana.

USA

REFERENCE
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INDIANA ROOM

Dear Mother and Dad:

I hope that you are getting better service on the mail than we are. Ours is still lousy and it has been so long since we have had any that we won't know what to do when it does get here. We do get a small dribble of it but we know that there is a big hold up somewhere along the line. We only get about two or three letters a day for the entire group. Seems odd that they can get that much and yet not be able to get us any more. We all hope that the situation will clear up before long and we begin to get it with some degree of regularity. The radio is on and we have one of the favorite programs on. It is an Italian propaganda broadcast and about the simplest thing that you could imagine. We listen to it for the laughs we get and the music they play. They always play the latest recordings and we get a kick out of it. They keep saying that all we have to do is to walk into the Italian lines and tell them that Sally of the Axis (as she calls herself) sent us and we'll be well taken care of. Now, I ask you, hasn't that a jab in the nose? Especially since the situation is the exact reverse and the Italians are walking into our lines and giving up by the bunches. In one place they counted the prisoners before dark and locked them up for the night. When they counted the prisoners next morning there were twenty five more than they had put in the night before. The GIs were baffled but took it for what it was worth. Such is life at war. We have these birds backed up into a corner now and it won't be long before the kill. We'll either drive them into the ocean or wipe them out. Don't think it will be long but, is just my opinion and nothing official. We are just as much in the dark as you folks are even though we are doing the fighting. All our news comes over the radio and we can learn more about the war by picking up London and Boston than by any other method. Was in Constantinople yesterday to pick up some supplies. While I was waiting for chow I was sitting in the park and an Old Lady came up and introduced herself. She had two of the cutest little kids (a boy 6 and a girl 5) her grandchildren with her and said that they wanted to meet an American so she picked one me. She could speak a little bit of English as was able to understand her. Gave the kids a roll of life savers and they were tickled to death. They didn't want to leave and each hung on each of my legs like their lives depended on it. Their home is in Paris and they just got out of there in time. They had a little time under the Nazi Regime but finally managed to get away. It was most interesting to talk to the lady and she wants me to come back there and see them whenever I can. She even wanted me to stay yesterday evening and go to a bridge party that they were having. Can you imagine that? In North Africa running into a bridge game! Had to get back to the field however so had to refuse the invit. Will stop and see them the next time I go back for those two kids were really cute and just and neat and clean as a pin. They were well mannered for the little girl courted very low and kissed my hand when she was introduced and the little boy bowed very low and then

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shook hands. I was plenty impressed. Things here are the same and everything is under control. There is no need for you to worry about me and only hope that I can get home in the very near future. I can hardly wait for that day and when it does get here, I'll be a hard guy to hold. Read about the guy that got off the boat and kissed the ground and know exactly how he feels. Might even do the same thing myself. Speaking of irony of war: we have had several missions where we go over the target and just knock the living daylights out of them and at the same time drop leaflets telling the Arabs that we are their friends. Ho about that? That is the old stock joke of the outfit and have a lot of fun joking about it. Take good care of yourselves and I'll be seeing you one of these days.

Your lovingson,

(Signed) Forrest

COPY

Monday, February 1, 1943

From: Forrest E. Dukes, Jr.,
17th Bomb Group, Headquarters,
APO 520, c/o Postmaster,
New York, New York.

TO: Mr. and Mrs. Forrest E. Dukes
5471 Julian Avenue,
Indianapolis, Indiana

Perhaps you will think that I have lost my mind for it has been less than a month since I wrote to you last. Am trying to write at every opportunity but am so far behind that I doubt if I ever catch up. Will keep plugging at it, however. Things are the same with me for I am as well as I ever was and the only thing that bothers me is being over in this place where I can't run down to the drug store and get a soda or a malted milk. Of course you know that I miss you and Virginia. This thing can't last forever so have to get home one of these days. One of the most thrilling things to note is how superior the American is to any other race of people. For instance, the French live as they please and seem to make no effort to better themselves. The Americans move in and with only scraps and broken parts improvise all the modern comforts of home that they can possibly make. Our ingenuity is surprising. Have told you how we have fixed up our living quarters and at this point they are quite comfortable. Our radio men have removed certain radio sets from planes, rebuilt them and now we have on in every room. Have made showers from the bomb bay gas tanks which makes things a little better than the helmet bath tub. Have made a few contacts and have a small store of food on hand at all times. Never a night goes by that we don't have something to eat. Have even had malted milks (without the ice cream) and all the eggs that we can eat. Have found a lot of old French cars that they have given up as no good and have rebuilt them and made spare parts from any piece of metal that we could lay our hands on. As a result, I have an old '35 Ford that I run around in whereas before I had to walk. We take it to market with us and it is quite a sight. That old crate is loaded down with guys that go into market and argue with the natives about the price of this and that. We get all kinds of fresh fruits, oranges, tangerines, dates and eggs. Have a lot of fun trying to get our minds off the war. Guess I had better close and get this in the mail for the Colonel wants something else and if I wait until he gets through, it'll be too late. Will write the next chance I get so don't give up hope.

All my love,

(Signed) Forrest

COPY

Thursday December 10, 1942

From. Forrest E. Dukes, Jr., (Lieut)
17th Bomb. Group, Headquarters,
APO 520, c/o Postmaster,
New York, New York

To: Mr. and Mrs. Forrest E. Dukes,
5471 Julian Avenue,
Indianapolis, Indiana.

Dear Mother and Dad:

I imagine that you have been pretty well disappointed in that you haven't heard from me for sometime. I can assure you that I haven't forgotten you for I think of you constantly. The situation has been that we could not write. At this writing I am "somewhere in North Africa". It has been pretty rough going but the situation is well in hand at this point so we can settle down and write a few over-due letters. The mail situation is not very good for have only received one letter and the birthday card from you. Guess the mail will catch up with us someday. This African deal is very interesting and I can even appreciate England after being here. I have never seen such filth in my life and hope that I don't see any more after we leave here. Our arrival was so sudden that we had a chance to see how these people live in regular times. Guess the French are responsible for the way this place is and they are dirty from a heredity standpoint. Am able to get along with the natives all right for they understand Spanish. As poor as mine is, they get the idea of what I am trying to say. Have learned a little bit of Hindustani and can get along in that to a very limited degree. Am just learning French so my ability to converse in that language is more than just limited. It is a joke to see trying to talk to these birds for what I can't say in one language, I can usually say in another and if that doesn't work I can always resort to sign language--which is almost always! Am even more convinced that there is no place like the good old USA. Saw the Rock of Gibraltar and contrary to the general opinion the word "Prudential" is not written all over the side. Don't believe those advertisements from now on. Sure wish I was going to be home for Christmas. Am sure that I'll be there for the next one. Had better get back to work so will close. Don't worry about me for I am all right and will take care of myself. Will write you again next week.

All my love,

(Signed) Forrest

Methodist Letters
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EXCERPTS FROM LETTERS FROM THOSE

WITH ARMED FORCES

Indiana
INDIANA

February 17th the pastor sent a letter to all persons from our church membership and families who are with the armed forces. In it he suggested, among other things, that the recipients send a brief message to the congregation for the Recognition service. It is impossible to give the full text of each letter which has come as a reply. We have, therefore, made excerpts from each and all letters received to date. These give us a pretty good idea of how much our folks away from us appreciate hearing from home.

* * *

Italy - March 1

Just received your letter of the 17th of February. So glad to hear from you again. It really made me happy to get your letter asking me to write a letter to be read in the "Recognition Service." I wish to express my appreciation for your kindness and thoughtfulness. . . I know the boys must read their "Strength for Service" which was sent to them. I have carried mine since a year ago January from the States, Africa and here. Also receive the Temple Tower regularly. Tell all that they are doing a great job.

- - Pvt. Edward A. Fears

(Somewhere) March 2, 1944

I received your welcome letter of Feb. 17 today and wish to thank you for your Christmas and New Years greetings. . . Things are moving along favorably out here with the Marines doing such a wonderful job. . . I enjoy the Temple Tower very much. There seems to be plenty of extra work for everyone. We know, over here, that you are backing us.

- - R.H. Harold

AP0 831 March 9, 1944

Received your "V" letter several days ago but have been quite busy until now. . . Was in a spot last Sunday making it a bit hard to attend church, the first time in several weeks I have missed. You have read, no doubt, about all the work of men in the service pertaining to the church. . . One does not fully realize the full meaning of Christ's teachings until confronted with the emergency now facing the entire world. . . Church never meant much to me until the past several years. . . My regards to all.

- - Cpl. Arthur D. Evans

Ottumwa, Iowa - 1 March 1944

You wrote me and asked me to write a letter for your service, so I am answering it. I don't know exactly what you want, but I will tell you a little about the Waves side of the Navy. (Here follows an account of Patty's duties as a Wave and the work of this organization) So far our Chaplains have been very nice to us. The services are great and all of us really appreciate them. . . They are very helpful. The Red Cross does a lot here on the base. Also the U.S.O's. (Here is an account of the work of U.S.O.) Well, it's time for lights out so I must quit.

- - Pat (Patricia Haley)

Truax Field - Madison, Wisc
February 29, 1944

What a pleasant surprise I had when I opened your letter. It had been in transit for some time, I guess. Your news of the church was very welcome and I thought many times about you all. . . I am enrolled in radio school here. (Since Feb. 29, Harvey has moved to Scott Field, Illinois) (Here follows an account of what he is doing) I went to church at J.B and every Sunday the church was jammed with boys; so you see we do think about God many times. I know what it is to be really thankful now.

- - Harvey L. Work, Jr

7 March 1944: England

Received your very newsy "V" mail yesterday and enjoyed it ever so much. It certainly is very thoughtful of you all to write. Having been away so long I have almost lost contact with people and where they are now.

I understand that there are several Terre Haute people over here but as yet I have run into only a few of them.

- - (Cpl) Florence Jane McGregor

Bermuda - Feb, 19, 1944

I am writing you a few lines to inform you that I have been receiving the Temple Tower. It keeps me well informed on the religious activities at home. To show my appreciation of it, I am enclosing an "Outpost", our station's weekly paper published at the N.A.S. print shop where my duty is at present here in Bermuda. This paper every week has an article written either by Chaplain M.O. Stephenson, Protestant or Chaplain Ireland, Catholic. Chaplain Stephenson is a Methodist and preached in North Carolina. He really impresses each man here on the base every Sunday with his wonderful sermons. I attend divine services, Bible Study and Christian Fellowship on their respective schedules.

- - Paul Dean

California - March 20, 1944

Your letter came yesterday and I was glad to hear from you. I hope you receive this and many more letters before the "Recognition Service" next Sunday.

Our outfit does not have a Chaplain as yet but on two occasions the Chaplain from another organization has come to us with a most welcome message.

I have received several cards and gifts from members of the church and I would especially like to thank the Inasmuch Class and their wonderful teacher, Mrs. Sankey. Tomorrow night we are going by convoy to Palm Springs for a skating party, which reminds me of the swell times we used to have at Epworth League skating parties. . . . Best regards to the entire congregation. - - Bud Meinberg

Edgewood Arsenal, Md. 22 March 1944

How nice it would be if all of us could be together in person for the "Recognition Service!" Altho Bob and I will be several hundred miles away, we will be thinking of you. . . Bob has been stationed at Edgewood for 15 months so we feel almost at home. We enjoy our church associations - especially our young people's group which meets on Friday evenings. . . We enjoy the worship services on Sunday but are a little prejudiced and prefer the form of service and the songs used at Methodist Temple. . . . We look forward to reading the Temple Tower each month. . . I would like to have seen Pat Haley when she was home. . . We see Quentin Jeffries quite often. . . Best wishes to all. We do appreciate your thoughtfulness. - - Robert and Mrs. Buck (Lucille Nelson)

(Somewhere) 13 March 1944

Sorry to have failed answering your letter but I was waiting my new address before writing you. As you know, my address changed quite often while I was in the States. . . Right now I'm on one of those all-expense tours that Uncle Sam is sponsoring. In the folder, they tell when you go and sometimes where but the return trip does not go with the bargain ticket. . . In the letter you asked if there was anything that I might want said in the service. Well, to me East er has always been a rather special day and one that I always enjoyed at home and at church. This year my church will be an army chapel. . . Incidentally the New Testament that the church sent me a long time ago has proved to be very servicable and has shown it can take a beating. I carry it with me in all my rambling around over the globe. . . Hope you have a grand East er - - "Dick" (Dick Mullins)

Warrenton, Va. March 18, 1944

Last week I sent you a letter thanking you for bulletins I had received from the church. I enjoyed them much. Now I find that I have much more to thank you for: or at least the classes through you. . . . The Testament and Prayer Book arrived today and I admit they were very much unexpected. . . I prize it highly because it carries the friendship of persons who have thought of me while not knowing me personally. . . I hope to receive more bulletins: not especially for myself but more for my wife (Mildred Clark) who grew up in the midst of those kind people. . . Thanks again. - - Cpl John Robert Long

Tucson, Ariz - 21 Feb 1944

Think I had better answer your letter before the Navy decides that it will find something for me to do. You know the armed services seem to have the unusual knack of locating some item or two which has been left undone. . . . One of the things which helps me is the line of letters, papers, bulletins which arrive quite often. Of course, not enough, it just can't be too often. I enjoy the bulletins from the church immensely. . . Have attended two different Methodist churches, Presbyterian, Baptist, Lutheran, Congregational, Episcopal and Church of Christ. One thing is evident though in all the churches: predominate number of service men in all services. . . It is an easy thing to get someone to go to church, any church, with you. All you need to say is: "Anyone going to church on Sunday?" You'll immediately have two to ten volunteers. . . . Good luck in all your endeavors and I feel I express the thoughts of all the others when I say, "Thanks for remembering us."

- - John Bright

S.S. W.B. Ayer - 12 March 1944

Upon arrival at this friendly foreign jungle port, our ship welcomed the stacks of mail. After reading your letter of local news, I want to thank you for it and the Testament sent prior to Christmas season. . . I am an Engine Cadet training aboard a U.S. Merchant Vessel. After making a successful trip to the Hawaiian Island group and Australia, I am now in a little more rustic environment. . . . You will be interested to know that each batalion is given the service of a Chaplain to help in personal problems among the boys. . . Thank you kindly for your interest.

- - Cadet Midshipman

John O. Hinds

Fort Knox, Ky. March 17, 1944

I hope this letter finds everyone, . . of you in good health. I am fine. I have lost twenty-five pounds since I have been in the army. . . Received your lovely gifts today and was very glad to get them. They were very unexpected. At present I am very busy and get little time to read. . . Wish you would thank every one who was in any way responsible for my receiving these gifts. . . I am in tank command which is a very rugged outfit and am going to gunnery school. I am to qualify as a driver of a tank, a half-truck, a truck and a jeep. . . . I had wished very much to be at home Easter but I have learned that I will have to start on Battle Training Easter day. . . Best wishes to all. - - George Lee Pair

England, March 10, 1944

I want to thank you for the kind and thoughtful letter I received a few days ago. . . Every Sunday we hold church services in a room above the mess hall and we have a large attendance. We have a Protestant Chaplain and he is well liked by all. Our services are similar to those at Methodist Temple in good old Terre Haute. We sing familiar hymns of all faiths. I attended services in a small English village Methodist Church and their services are very similar to ours in the States. The only differences are: the people have a certain section of seats to worship in and they bring their own hymnals. . . I live in a brick barracks with all modern conveniences. We have very good food. . . It has agreed with me because I weigh thirty pounds more than when I went into the army over a year ago. . . Since a year ago, I have seen my share of this small world. . . It has made me realize and appreciate the warm love and comfort of home. All of these things tend to increase our anxiety to return and live again, the way God intended.

- - Charles Dressler

Joplin, Mo. March 23, 1944

Helen and I have been very grateful to receive your very welcome letters and Temple Tower which we always look forward to. It's awfully nice to know that the "folks back home" are thinking of you. How we'd love to be back with you! . . . We have no trouble keeping busy. I am at camp six days per week and Helen is teaching in one of the public schools here in Joplin. I am instructing in Principles of Electricity at Central Signal Corps School. . . . We attend Byers Avenue Methodist Church here. . . . We were very lucky to find a nice place to stay. We have a piano and that's about as necessary as a table on which to eat. . . . You spoke of the Lindermans being moved to Camp Crowder. We have seen them several times. They had dinner with us last Saturday evening. Louise seems to be doing well. . . . Thanks again for Temple Twoer.

- - Russel and Helen McCoy

A.P.O. 923 San Francisco (P.M.)
5 March 1944

Last night I was listening to "Radio Tokyo" the official Japanese radio station that so "honorably" entertains us here ("here" is Australia, we think). Near the end of this session, reference was made, in essence, "That we would soon see that our so-called God had forsaken us as the Japanese Imperial Forces moved on to victory." Many such statements have come from this source but this particular one seemed amplified in my mind especially when I received your correspondence today. Maybe "Radio Tokyo" has something there but are a little confused. We know that God has not forsaken us and we know the Japs are definitely on the wrong road to victory. But: maybe it's we who are forsaking God just a little bit. Forsaking Him when we forget our daily prayer for victory; forsaking Him when we slacken our best efforts for His cause; forsaking Him when we avoid the sacrifice we must make. Perhaps an inventory is in order. . . . Best regards to my friends there and for the "Recognition Service."

(Capt) Norman E. Tucker

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Jack Gillespie, Green Castle, Indiana

REFERENCE

INDIANA ROOM DO NOT CIRCULATE

September 24, 1944

They are finally permitting us to tell the different places that we have been so starting now, I am going to relate to you the story of my travels. I shall have to break it up into installments, as it will take quite a lot of space. It would be well if you could secure a map of France so as to make things more clear. I want to keep these letters, as they will be the one and only account that I will have of my travels.

You have no idea of the excitement and anxiety we went through as we churned through the water in the landing barge. Of course, at the time we landed, there was no firing on the beach, but from the boat we could see spirals of smoke rising from the distant, but not too distant towns. After our barge hit the sand of the beach, the front of it opened up and our trucks drove off into the water. The water was not deep, only about one foot high, so there was no trouble. We drove only about a half mile and then stopped for an important job. You see, before leaving England, the vehicles were waterproofed, in case the water should be too deep upon landing. To waterproof a jeep or other vehicle, the important parts are smeared with a mixture of oil and asbestos. After landing in France, we had to stop as soon as possible after landing and de-waterproof the vehicles. That meant scraping all the coating from the motor and other vital parts. ~~What~~ What a job. But in several hours enough was accomplished to permit us to go on our way. We drove only for several miles, when it became evident that it would soon be too dark to continue in safety. So we stopped for the night at a little town of St. Germain, which is on one side of the Cherbourg ~~peninsula~~ peninsula. That was without doubt the most uncomfortable night I spent during this war. Because our duffle bags were in another truck and we had no blankets, the only alternative was to ~~lie~~ lie down on the ground, hoping that our raincoats would keep out a little dampness. Of course it was too cold to sleep, so we just lay there and shivered all night long.

The next day we started off bright and early. I had no idea where we were going. As a matter of fact, we crossed the entire tip of the peninsula before I was aware of our destination. Toward early afternoon we arrived at the Hotel DeLaMer which was formerly a very swank resort hotel on the coast. It is located in the town of Carteret a very small town usually, but at that time well populated with refugees from further inland. I could have asked for no better place to stay. The whole outfit was quartered in the hotel which was only fifty yards from the beach. We were permitted to go swimming in the early evening. Everything was at our fingertips. It was here that I made the acquaintance of M. and Mme. Paul de Couville, at which home I spent many interesting evenings. It was here that I first made a conscious attempt to learn to speak French, also where I first became conscious of the French habits and customs. I also made the acquaintance of another family who possessed a very good piano and two lovely daughters. When I was not visiting the Decouvilles, I was here playing piano or playing ping pong with one of the daughters.

It was in Carteret that our troops had such a terrific time. You remember the ~~hacker~~ battle of La Haye du Puits. Well it was there that I had my closest call. While our office was at Carteret, the Chaplain had to make frequent trips to the front lines, and my job was to drive him. This particular time we were up around La Haye du Puits at the time the German 88's were so fierce. They were bursting all around. We drove until we could drive no further (about 400 yards from the line of fire) and then the Chaplain dismounted near an intersection and told me to park the jeep while we went up alone. At that time, I knew about as much about warfare as you do. So, green as I was, I parked the jeep in the intersection, not knowing that the Germans were aiming for that very place. Suddenly from a garage located about sixty feet away came a small voice saying "Corporal, if you want to live, you had better get that jeep in this garage". Well needless to say I backed the jeep into the garage as quick as possible. No sooner had I done so than --WHAM-- right at the crossroad. Well, I guess I must have been rather a sickly green color. I imagined that the Chaplain had gotten it and he imagined that I had been hit. Soon he came running down the road, and jumped in the jeep. I think we must have hit sixty miles an hour getting away from that place.

From Carteret we moved to a real beach resort named Denneville. The town itself was very small, only a crossroad in fact. But the resort was quite large, many of the vacation cottages being quite substantial looking. There was plenty of room for everyone. Our section alone had a four room house to itself. I forgot to mention that during our trip down ~~in~~ the ~~west~~ coast, we

caught several glimpses of the famed Mont San Michel rising out of the water like a sunken city. But back to Denneville. Nothing very exciting happened. Oh, yes, one thing. We did find a mine underneath the room we slept in. It was quite accidental. One of the boys happened to look into the foundation of the house, and there sitting quite prettily was a mine about eight inches high. Well, since there was no bomb disposal squads nearby, there was nothing to do but let it sit there. That night one of the boys took his bed and moved into another part of the house. I thought that this was silly. That mine can't go off by itself, I thought. But I must confess after two nights, I too took up my bed and walked. At Denneville, we also had a nice beach, with no civilians around to bother us. So, since there was no fair sized town nearby, we passed away the late afternoons and evenings on the beach.

From Denneville, we traveled to another beach resort at Carolles. This time we also lived in a large hotel. There was not much doing here. Only one interesting thing. When the tide was out, we could go in swimming and see in the distance the Mont San Michel. It was quite a thrill. This place was quite a ritzy place at one time, but as usual the Germans had occupied it before us. In fact they had left just two days before we moved in. The Germans have a habit of preparing for us. In the yard in front of the Hotel, the Engineers found no less than fifty mines which the Heines had left for us. Since it was impossible to dig out these mines (the Germans also have the habit of putting one mine on top of another so when one is dug out the other will explode) they had to explode them in the ground. The explosion broke most of the windows of the hotel, and almost completely demolished the dozens of little beach and bath houses scattered around the beach.

One of the most interesting places we stayed was Change. This time we moved away from the coast into a chateau. Yes, a real chateau. While not one of the very large ones, but large enough to have a private chapel attached to it. The owner had also built the town church which was situated next to the chateau. The town was about six hundred in population and I imagine the church would have seated close to a thousand. That is the way these French do things. While we were at this location, we received several rather close scares. Almost every night the ack-ack guns would open up on German planes which were trying to destroy the bridge at Laval, some two miles away from Change. One night the planes dropped flares in the next field and we all thought our time had come. But I guess the Germans were too busy to bother with a non-combatant outfit made up of office workers. While at Change we visited several interesting spots. One especially interesting thing was the Palace of Maintenon. This was built by one of the kings of France for his lady friend, Madame de Maintenon. I never expect to see anything so lovely. The Chaplain and I were the first Americans to enter this place. The Germans had occupied it somewhat, but had not torn it up in the least. Before they left, they boarded it up, and as usual the Chaplain and I arrived there the day after they left. There was nobody around, so we pried open one of the boards and went in. It was the most beautiful place one could imagine. All the drapes, furniture, books, statues were just as they had been at the time of building. The place was so large that it took us a half hour to find our way out of the place.

Another interesting place was the Benedictine monastery at Evron. Although it is now a large church and convent, it was formerly a large monastery. At that time there was no town. Just the church and buildings surrounding. The church stands just as it formerly did and the most interesting place is the old chapel adjoining it which was the first building established there.

From Change we went to Dreux. This was the first large town we had ever been quartered in. Starting here, our quarters were and always have been the large College of the town. The college is not the same in France as in the States. It corresponds to the high school. Dreux was not as friendly as the other places had been. I think the reason was this. The French thought that as soon as the Americans moved in, that they would have all the food they wanted. Well at that time, the transportation situation was bad, and it was all we could do to transport our rations which were rather bad at that time. So the people of the town were rather disappointed in us.

While we were at Dreux our supplies of testaments, wine etc., began to run low, so the Chaplain and I had to go clear back to Cherbourg to obtain more supplies. Now Cherbourg

is quite a town. We arrived there about two in the afternoon, so I thought that I'd run to the nearest hotel and get me a room. There I was mistaken. For two hours I ran around from hotel to hotel to meet with the same results. No enlisted men allowed. I finally went to the Red Cross and explained the situation to the worker. She gave me the address of a small residence hotel, where I obtained a room for the night. I must say that Cherbourg certainly puts the enlisted man in his place.

Another interesting sight we visited while stationed at Dreux was the Chateau d'Anet. We drove to the small town of Anet and saw the chateau. Stopping a civilian I asked if the chateau was open to the public. She said certainly and led us over to the door. Little did we imagine that it was inhabited. Not only did we look around the place but the Countess who owned the chateau, a little lady of about seventy-five years, showed us around herself and proved quite interesting. In Dreux is a beautiful Chapel called the Chapel of Louis-Phillipe. It is here that the members of the Orleans family are buried. The chapel itself is beautiful and underneath it is the crypt. Each person buried there has a statue of himself over the tomb. One particularly interesting thing was a statue of one of the Counts and his wife. There was a partition separating them, his wife being in kind of a small room to herself. Upon inquiring we found out that his wife was a Protestant and could not be buried in the same room with the others.

From Dreux we journeyed to Rolleboise where we stayed at the home of Sir Hubert Ward, famed English explorer. His house was filled with books of all sorts and pictures of people and places he had visited. As usual this place had been occupied by the Germans and when we arrived it was a mess, with books scattered everywhere. It was during our stay at Rolleboise that we drove to Paris. This was the thrill of a lifetime. We first arrived at St. Germain where we saw an immense castle which was also the property of one of the former kings. After this we journeyed to Versailles. It is really impossible to describe the beauty of the palace and gardens. We were lucky for the gardens were in bloom and the masses of color were magnificent to behold. The castle itself is a masterpiece. I can't see how anyone would enjoy living there as it would take a year to visit all the rooms. The fountains were not running, but even so one could see the beauty of them.

From Versailles we made our way into Paris. It's only about five miles from one city to the other, but it is difficult to tell just when you hit Paris. Of course, the one sure sign is your first view of the Eiffel Tower. What a thrill. All my life I have seen pictures of the tower and now to drive along right in front of it. Some scenes seem to be less attractive than they're painted, but the Eiffel Tower seemed even greater. It is rather hard to find your way around Paris if you do not know just where you are going. Of course we hit out for the Champs Elysees. This must be about the largest road in the world. I think you could easily get ten automobiles in a steady stream. We came in sight of the famed Arch de Triomphe. Of course we had to drive around it. Just at the time we were there, there were a group of civilians and soldiers placing a wreath on the tomb of the unknown soldier. The other sights Place de la Concord, Palais De Justice, etc., were just as interesting. We finally stopped at the Place de l'opera. Although the opera was then closed, they were preparing for the winter season. The French don't let a little thing like a war interfere with their entertainment. While we stopped, we did a little shopping. While I was sitting in the jeep, I made the mistake of taking out a pack of cigarettes. Instantly there was a large crowd around me hands outstretched, begging for a cigarette. It was really pitiful. Some offered to buy them at any price I would ask. It seems that they had only been allowed two packs a month at the price of three dollars per pack. I went in a rather nice gift shop. Starting out in my school-book French, I was quickly interrupted and told that almost every large shop in Paris had English speaking personnel. We tried to see the Louvre, but it was ~~still~~ still closed. However, I may return some day when it is open. As it was getting late, we asked if there was any place where we could eat in Paris. The answer was no. Even the population there did not have enough. There was only bread to be had. So we set out again for Versailles. There the situation was better, except that you had to have coupons. We asked a man who passed by if we could eat anywhere. He took us to his home and we really ate. We started off with a Suze cocktail. Suze is an apertif made from gentian root. Then for the appetizers we had sardines. Following this, beefsteak with french fries and small potatoes dipped in grease. Also a green salad, followed by dessert. During the meal we had a very red wine and champagne. After the meal he served Napoleon Brandy one hundred years old.

We spent the night at a hotel in Versailles called the Hotel de Noailles. The Duc de Noailles was quite a figure in the Revolutionary War. For breakfast we returned to this same man's house. He wanted to start off the breakfast with a shot of cognac, but there I drew the line. These French are much more worried about what they drink than what they eat. After the meal we set out and returned to Rolleboise.

From Rolleboise we turned north toward Belgium. This time we located in a large town by the name of St. Amand. There was nothing particularly interesting in the way of sights except one particular one in St. Amand itself. This was the tower and carillon. Originally it had been but the gateway to a very large monastery which extended back of the small village. But at the time of the Revolution the people became tired of the monks taking everything from them so they burned the monastery and left only this tower. They also shot off the heads of the statues, so the tower seems to be much older than it really is. One of the monks who lived and worked here was Huchald, a prominent figure in the history of musical notation. In St. Amand, I also met another countess, a lovely woman of about thirty-five years who introduced me to the carillonneur who in turned obliged with a concert. This was the first time that I had been privileged to watch one play the carillon and it was very interesting. Especially his rendition of the Mozart "Marche a la Turk" which seemed like an impossible task.

We thought that we would go from here to Belgium, but as usual the army moves in a mysterious way, its wonders to perform. We came down south again to the town of Wassy. This was a rather large town, but it was strictly for farmers and there was nothing to be had in the way of merchandise. The only thing which was plentiful was champagne. This champagne could be had for five dollars or six packages of cigarettes.

While we were stationed in Wassy we made a very interesting trip to Domremy La Pucelle, the birthplace of Joan of Arc. We first saw the small church she attended, a very tiny and not very pretty place. Then we visited her home which is probably just as it was when she lived there. The greatest thing though was the church which they have built in her honor. It is called the Basilica and is made entirely out of white stone, giving a very bright appearance on the inside, a thing not very common in the churches of France. The walls of the church proper are lined with paintings depicting scenes from the life of the saint. And the altar is the most beautiful that I have ever seen.

From Wassy we journeyed to Mirecourt. This town was rather on the pro-Nazi side, most of the people being able to speak fluent German. One night a bunch of us fellows went to a cafe, bent on securing a bottle of champagne. The proprietor shook his head and sadly told us that the awful Germans had taken all his champagne. Well, I had my doubts, and we waited a while until the proprietor became a little on the tight side. Then I went over to him and in German asked him if he didn't have a little champagne for us. Well, he went into his cellar and brought out three quarts, one of which he gave us. And I continued to speak to him in German to keep up his good spirits.

One day we had to visit one of our military cemeteries, so we set out. We stopped first at Nancy, the largest city we have visited with the exception of Paris. This was really a modern city. It is the nearest in appearance to an American city that I have ever seen in France or England. Again the people were rather inclined toward the Germans, but treated us with courtesy and consideration. From here we went to the small town of Andilly where is located one of the U.S. Military cemeteries. Every time I visit one of these places, I become very morbid. It is a terrible sight to see those poor fellows lying out there on the ground waiting to have a sack thrown over them before being dumped into their hole. The fellows from the tank outfits were burned to a cinder, not even being recognizable as a human being. The fellows who had been killed by shell bursts were in better shape, although some of them had their intestines hanging out. Some of them were entirely swathed in bandages. It is a wonder that they even took the trouble to try to save them. It's certainly not like seeing bodies at a funeral parlor. For the most part, the expressions on their faces are most agonizing.

From Mirecourt we moved to the city of Luneville. The chaplain and I arrived before any of

our outfit so we toured around the city for awhile. As we pulled in the 315 Infantry was just moving out. They really had a rough time of it. When the Americans first came into the city some of the civilians started shooting at them. But when it became certain that the Germans could not come back, they too brought out their flags and came up to shake hands. The French are a funny lot. At Luneville is located the Chateau of Stanislaus. Stanislaus was King of Poland in the Eighteenth Century and built this chateau. It was being used by the Germans as an Officers Candidate School before they left.

In Luneville we found our first Protestant church. It was a small affair but looked mighty good to us. We held our Sunday services in it and the first Sunday we were there I played for the civilian service. Being in French, it was a little hard to follow, but I struggled through it. The pastor is very nice and I spent many evenings playing his piano which he so graciously placed at my disposal. The first Sunday we were there, he invited the Chaplain and myself to dinner. We had an excellent dinner with the exception of the dessert which was cake made with a rum filling. I prefer my cake without the rum. While we were at Luneville we had to contend with the artillery fire the whole time. It was worse at night but after the first two nights we became used to it and were able to sleep.

After our stay in Lunville, we moved into Alsace. The town was called Brumath. It seemed very strange at first, because I had been speaking nothing but French and here I had to start speaking nothing but German. We were quartered in the Schoolhouse, and had all modern conveniences. The town had a very large Protestant church with a fine three manual organ. It was a typical French organ made in Strassburg. I had never played one like it before, and it took me two or three hours to figure out all the gadgets on it.

It was while we were here that I had another of my experiences. The Chaplain left one morning to make the round of the Battalion aid stations. We drove and drove until we came into a small town in which was supposed to be an aid station. I thought it was rather strange that there were no people in sight, but being very green I didn't think twice about it. We found the aid station which was located in one of the houses. The Chaplain went inside and I sat in the jeep for a while and then wandered up and down the street for a while. I finally got tired waiting and went inside. I was then told that a soldier had been killed about an hour ago in the street by a sniper who was still at large. I guess I'll never learn.

We spent Christmas in Brumath. I organized two choirs, one Protestant and one composed of Protestants, Catholics and Jews. On Christmas eve, the mixed choir went caroling. We first sang on several street corners and then went to an old peoples home and sang for almost an hour. After we were finished, the Sisters who ran the home brought out the schnapps, gave us each some and also a box of candy and some cookies for each of us. It was a lot of fun. For Christmas I had arranged the Christmas story into a musical number with carrator, choir and solists. We used some parts of the Messiah. On the day after Christmas, the choir and I went forward echelon and repeated the same program.

From Brumath we moved to a small town called Pffaffenhoffen. This town was very Pro-German. We stayed at the home of the pastor, except that he was not there. The pastor had been taken by the Americans as a collaborator. His family, while they were slightly friendly were definitely German. We did not stay too long in that town, as the Germans made a break through and were heading toward us. We pulled out of Pffaffenhoffen about five o'clock in the morning after a very sleepless night. This was the closest call we had experienced, and everybody was excited and uneasy. We moved into the Vosges mountains. The nearest town was about seven kilometers away and was called Schirmeck. It was near this town that the concentration camp of Struthof was located. We tried to see it but the snow was too deep and we could not make it. We were located in what used to be a school for difficult children. There was only the school, a tavern and about three houses. And as usual the only thing to do in the envenings was to go to the tavern and drink beer. The scenery here was the most beautiful I have ever seen. There was also a Protestant church in Schirmeck where we held services. The town itself is quite a vacation resort and has a mammoth tuberculosis sanitorium. The corps rest camp was located in this sanitorium.

The next place we moved to was a convent. This may sound strange, but the building was actually a convent before the war. When the Nazis moved in, they kicked all the sisters out and made the camp into a Hitler youth camp. The people of this vicinity tell how beautiful the convent and grounds around it was. For example the stations of the cross were in the form of little grottos placed at intervals along the path which led through the woods back of the convent. At the front courtyard was a statue of the Blessed Virgin. It was firmly bolted to the cement, and when the Germans couldn't move it, they hacked it to pieces with axes. Outside the convent is a large grotto in memory of St. Bernadette. However, nothing is left but the stones. The inside is now very plain, but one could see that it was once very modern, even to an elevator. The people also said that the Hitler youth were strictly forbidden to enter or attend church. The convent is located in a tiny town called Hoube. I don't suppose there are more than twenty houses in the town. But about five miles from this town is another called Dagsburg or Dabo. This town has quite a history. Near the town is an old Roman cemetery dating back to the time of Caesar. And on a high hill right above the town is an enormous rock upon which is built a church. Years ago, there was a castle upon this rock, and in this castle was born Pope Leo the ninth. I climbed up to the church. It is naturally dedicated to this Pope and from the tower you really have a most wonderful view. The church in Dabo proper also is an outstanding. Behind the altar is a large painting, perhaps fifteen feet in height. It so happens that this is an original painting by Jean Paul Rubens. And the tabernacle in the church dates from the tenth century and is inlaid in solid gold. Both the picture and the tabernacle came from an old Benedictine which is no longer existant.

One day a friend and I started walking at one in the afternoon and returned at five. The nice thing about this country is that there is always something interesting to see within walking distance. This time it was the ruined castle of Ochsenstein which they tell me was built around 1300. Only the ruins remain, but from the look of them it must have been an enormous castle. The family I lived with were very kind. They could speak nothing but German and patois. So my German improved considerably during that period. And did they love to eat. Every night before retiring I had usually two fried eggs and a big bowl of fried potatoes and milk. Besides some pie. The way they eat pie is really something. They take a knife and cut off a piece, then picking up the piece with their fingers, they put it in their mouth. One day I had dinner with them. For hors-d'oeuvres we had cold tongue, little sausages, pickled carrots, pickled beets, pickled onions, pickles and deviled eggs, four meat courses, four vegetable courses, three kinds of pastry and coffee and schnapps. They make a delicious pie of cheese. She also fixed potatoes with milk and meal and fried them in deep fat. Every night before I went to bed, the wife placed a bed warmer in my bed.

When we finally had to move, we went to a little town called Morhange, which is near Pont a Mousson. However, we only stayed there about three days. Then we started our trip to Belgium. Most of the fellows went by rail, but we went in our jeep. The first city on our list was Metz. I thought that it had been badly hit, but on the contrary it was in fine shape. And a beautiful city. It reminded me a lot of Straszburg. From Metz we went to Verdun where we spent the night. It was quite a thrill to visit the battlefields of the last war. There are many monuments built in that vicinity to honor the American soldiers. I saw the statue of Rodin and the two towers from which the Army copied the design for the Army Engineers. The town itself was nice. I stayed in a hotel and went to a movie that night. There were three movies running. From Verdun we moved on to Sedan, which boasts quite an old fortress. Practically every city has an old fortress on the hill. Sedan was hit rather hard by the Germans in 1940 and has never been rebuilt. They are hard up for food and other things. Leaving Sedan, we entered Belgium and first passed through Namur and then large Liege. Liege is a miniature Paris. However, it has been receiving its share of Buzz Bombs. On a Sunday evening we arrived at our destination, St. Trond. This place is a very religious town. It boasts 17 monasteries, convents and churches. Our office is located in the Catholic school and I sleep in one of the monasteries. It is quite nice. The brothers will do anything for you. The first day I was there, one of them insisted that I take a bath. It was very quiet there at night, so I can really rest.

Today I visited the famous astronomical clock. It is located in an old church which was

which was built around 1230. The church is very beautiful. The walls are covered with paintings, most of which are in good condition. The wooden statues are very worn but are still recognizable. The clock stands in the middle of the church. On the hour, the Westminster chimes are heard, then a door in the base opens showing death striking the hour. After this a door in the side opens and a parade of figures issues forth. These figures are amazing. One is weaving at the loom. The movement is quite lifelike. Also to be seen is a watch which is set in a ladies ring. The face of the watch is 1mm in diameter. One must use a magnifying glass to see it. The church itself has quite an interesting history. In the Middle Ages, the men in this vicinity went to the Crusades and most of them were killed. The women then had no men, so they formed a group around which church which was called the munnery. They were sisters of the church, yet they did not take the strict vows of nuns.

From St. Trond we moved into Holland. It was just a small village called Bochooltz. We were put into a dance hall. However, I obtained a room in a private home which also had a piano in it. The people were very nice. There are no rich people or poor people. There was only so much food that could be purchased each month, no matter how much money they had. While I was here, I went on a one day pass to Liege. What a town. They took the soldier for all he was worth. Cognac was \$1.20 a shot and everything for sale was so expensive that you could not buy it. I did not do anything except walk the streets all day. The city itself is beautiful but very unpractical for the average American soldier. I did have a chance to see two musical events. One evening I went into Liege and saw and heard in person, Lily Pons and Andre Kostelanetz. He had an orchestra composed of soldiers which was extremely good. Among other things Lily sang Caro Nome. Some fellow played the Phapsody in Blue. All in all, it was very enjoyable. Two days later I had another pass to Liege. This time I saw the opera La Boheme with singers from the Brussels opera. Although I had to stand during the entire performance which was sung in French, it was well worth it. During that day I wandered around Liege, up and down the small narrow streets. One thing amused me. Two well dressed ladies, each about forty years old were carrying on a street gig fight. One woman was crying that the other had stolen her husband. Some one finally separated them. Upon seeing the amused look on my face, some civilian asked me if that was an uncommon sight in the United States. Another amusing sight is to see everyone walking along eating ice cream sandwiches. It is quite popular here.

Well, we finally moved from Bochooltz and went into Germany. We were billeted in the small town of St. Hubert. This was our first experience with the Germans. The civilians lived on one side of the town and we on the other. They had to stay in their homes except from the hours of 10:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. The hardest thing to get used to was the policy of non-fraternization. No matter how the civilians smiled or spoke, we were supposed to ignore them completely. It was hard, but we got used to it.

It was while we were at St. Hubert that the Division crossed the Rhine. The first wave went across at 5:00 A.M. and the Chaplain and I were at the beach at 1030 the same morning. I never heard so much artillery fire in my life. You could not count to three without hearing shells going off. All along the beach there were smoke pots to cover the advance of the troops. The first wave went across without a casualty. By the end of several days everything was running smoothly and the whole division was on the other side. We next moved to Hamborn on the other side of the Rhine. We were quartered in a large political building. It was very nice. We even had electricity and heat there. While we were there I had an opportunity to drive through Essen. It is practically nil. As a city, it seems finished. From this time on, our part in the war ~~was~~ consisted in cleaning out the Ruhr pocket which was not a difficult job. We moved to the town of Gerthe where we were again in private homes. My bedroom had a piano in it. which pleased me no end. From Gerthe, we moved to Recklinghausen. We were again in a political building, a very modern one at that. It was at Recklinghausen that we heard the news of the Victory in ~~Europe~~ Europe. There wasn't much ~~is~~ celebrating, only a few got drunk, most of us just went on as if nothing had happened. Well, the war in Europe is over. Now what?

World War II Four Chaplains - one Chapel

(Ind. file)

The CHAPEL of FOUR CHAPLAINS

BROAD and BERKS STREETS

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

DANIEL A. POLING, D. D.
Chaplain

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Please address correspondence
to Chapel Office:
1411 WALNUT STREET
PHILADELPHIA 2, PA.

May 24, 1951

Dear Friend:

Six years ago when four young army chaplains -- Catholic, Jewish and Protestant -- laid down their lives in the sinking S. S. DORCHESTER, I dedicated the remainder of my life to raising in their memory an interfaith House of God and to making it an enduring symbol of our national unity. For the spirit of their sacrifice transcends all religious barriers and is the core of our American way of life. Our son Clark was one of the four chaplains.

The Chapel of Four Chaplains, located at Broad and Berks Streets in Philadelphia, will be completed in the next few weeks. I will then begin what I believe to be my life's most important work. From this Chapel I shall broadcast each week to all America a message by which men of all faiths may discover a new sense of unity and brotherhood founded upon the Fatherhood of One God.

The Chapel in an unfinished state was dedicated on February 3 by the President of the United States. About \$300,000 was subscribed prior to the dedication by sympathetic men and women throughout the United States. We find that we must still raise about \$35,000 to add the finishing touches and to install the furnishings. Will you join in subscribing to this final effort? If you wish, your gift may be designated as a memorial to someone who has paid the supreme sacrifice. The following necessary items, available as memorials, will be inscribed with the names of the donors and those whom they would commemorate.

Air-Conditioning System	\$25,000
Decorated Ceiling	3,000
Speaker System	2,000
Altar Rails	1,500
Organ Screen	1,500
2 Memorial Windows	1,000 each
Sculptured Emblem of Chaplain	
Corps above Main Entrance	650
1 Clergy Chair	450
100 Cathedral Chairs	35 each

There is no more fitting place to remember our loved ones than in this Chapel honoring the fallen heroes of all branches of our armed services. They have passed on, but their sacrifice remains a compelling reason to those of us who remain to build a better America in which brotherhood is a common ideal.

Sincerely yours,

Daniel A. Poling
Daniel A. Poling



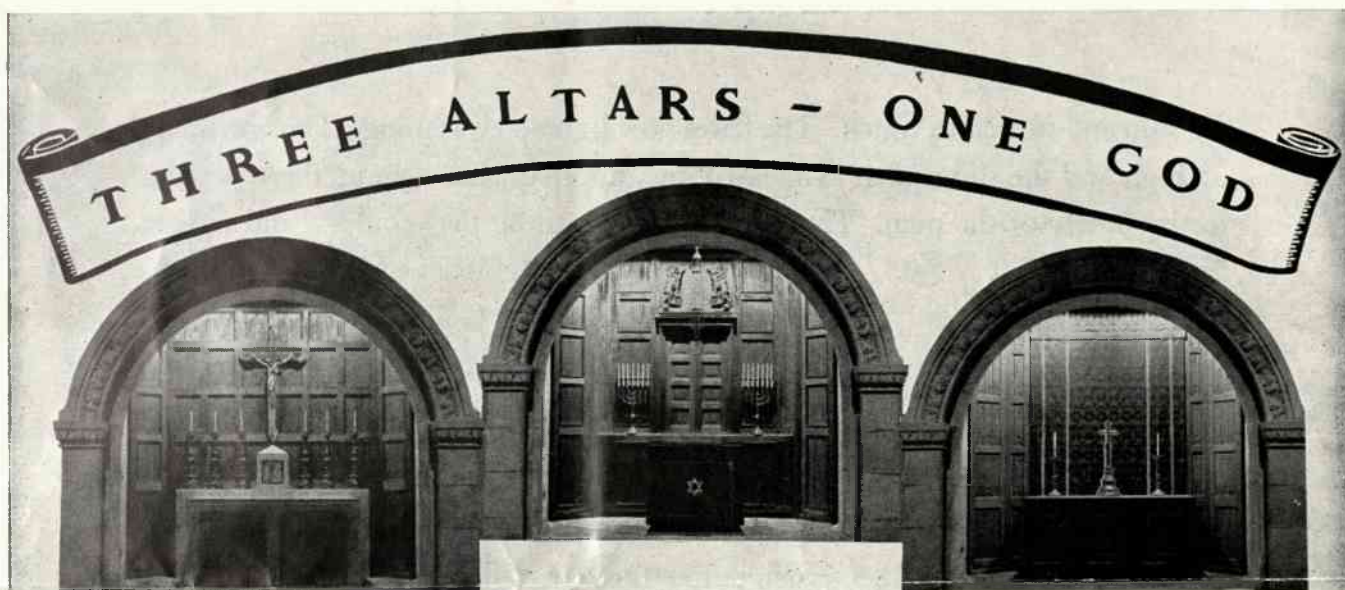
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The Chapel of Four Chaplains

A Sanctuary for Brotherhood

World War II - Four Chaplains - one Chapel



The Chapel of Four Chaplains contains three altars, one for each of the faiths—Catholic, Jewish and Protestant—that the Four Chaplains so heroically served. As soon as the Chapel is completely furnished, it will be open at all times to all people.

Above the entrance will burn an eternal light of Brotherhood and Goodwill, calling all Americans to that unity in peace which in war these four men of God have so imperishably demonstrated.

SPONSORS

The names of those listed below have served as officers of committees responsible for raising funds and completing the Chapel of Four Chaplains.

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THE CHAPEL OF FOUR CHAPLAINS

Office: 1411 Walnut Street, Philadelphia 2, Pa.